

## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
February 4, 2011

CONTACT: Thomas Popik  
Foundation for Resilient Societies  
603-321-1090

### **U.S. POWER GRID AND NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS VULNERABLE TO SOLAR ERUPTIONS AND OTHER SEVERE SPACE WEATHER**

### **GROUP TO ANNOUNCE FORMAL PETITION TO NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION TO REQUIRE INSTALLATION OF NEW BACK-UP SAFETY SYSTEMS**

**PRESS CONFERENCE:** Tuesday, February 8 at 9AM  
Front entrance of Federal Energy Regulatory Commission  
888 1st St NE  
Washington, DC 20426

The rolling blackouts in Texas this week once again demonstrated the fragility of the North American power grids and their vulnerability to extreme weather and other natural disasters. The safety of nuclear power plants depends on reliable grid power. Nuclear Regulatory Commissioner Jeffery Merrifield stated in 2006, "A big part of our risk-informed regulatory strategy depends on plants having access to reliable offsite power. We assume that there will be very few times when a plant will be subjected to a total loss of offsite power, and when such condition exists it will be for a relatively short period of time (hours or days rather than weeks)."

An October 2010 report from Oak Ridge National Laboratory discloses that the North American power grids are vulnerable to severe space weather and could experience widespread and long-term outages persisting 1-2 years. Seventy-one of 104 operating nuclear power plants are in the area of probable power system collapse as described in the Oak Ridge report.

The Foundation for Resilient Societies will hold a press conference to discuss its filing of a Petition for Rulemaking before the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to require nuclear plant licensees to install backup systems for safety in the event of long-term power outage.

Speaking will be economic researcher and engineer Thomas Popik of the Foundation for Resilient Societies. A group of experts, including George Baker, professor at James Madison University and former staff to the Commission to Assess the Threat to the United States from Electromagnetic Pulse (EMP) Attack; Bronius Cikotas, founder of the Asymmetrical Threat Analysis Response Center; Michael Del Rosso, research fellow of the Claremont Institute; Henry Kluepfel, former commissioner of the EMP Commission; Charles Manto, president of Instant Access Networks ; and Michael Mariotte, executive director of Nuclear Information and Resource Service will be on hand to answer questions.

At 10AM, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission will hold a conference on electric grid reliability. This conference is open to the press. Utility executives and experts in grid reliability will be in attendance.

For more information contact Thomas Popik, Foundation for Resilient Societies, email [thomasp@resilientsocieties.org](mailto:thomasp@resilientsocieties.org), phone 603-321-1090.

###